XII. *A Thermometrical Account of the Weather, for Three Years, beginning* September 1754. *as observed in* Maryland. *By Mr.* Richard Brooke. *Communicated by Mr.* H. Baker, *F. R. S.*

The highest and lowest State of the Mercury in each Month is here given, and other Observations are occasionally intermixed.

[Read March 8, 1759.]

	Mercury. Highest	Mercury. Lowest	
			1754.
Sept.	80	73	Winds for the most part easterly, and very rainy.
Oct.	80	34	Winds easterly, and much rain in the beginning: latter end fair.
Nov.	67	23	Winds variable. Snow and rain.
Dec.	60	23	Much rain.
			1755.
Jan.	69	23	Much rain. Snow on the 1st day.
Feb.	64	14	Much snow.
Mar.	79	24	Much rain.
Apr.	83	40	On the 16th it snowed as hard as ever I knew. Cleared up at two o'clock P. M. all dissolved before night. Not one shower of rain this month. Wind easterly till the 14th; afterwards mostly westward.

May

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	Mercury. Highest	Mercury. Lowest	
May	87	47	Extremely dry: ſeldom any clouds: no rain. Every vegetable almoſt burnt up: ſtrawberry-leaves, green plantain, and others, ſo criſp as to crumble. In this month many black cattle died for want of food.
June	90	70	Seaſonable weather.
July	93	60	Very dry.
Aug.	90	61	Very dry.
Sept.	93	45	Very dry.
Oct.	75	36	Seaſonable weather towards the end of this month. This was the drieſt ſummer and autumn ever remembered. Many ſprings dried up, that ran briſk before. My ſpring, a remarkable good one, ran very ſlow, and the water was unpleaſant.
Nov.	65	29	On Tueſday the 18th I felt three ſhocks of an earthquake about eight minutes before four in the morning. The firſt was ſevereſt: it ſhook the houſe very much, and waked me. The ſecond was leſs, and the third leaſt of all. They ſucceeded each other at about one minute's diſtance, and were felt all over the continent.
Dec.	71	15	On the 16th there was a briſk ſoutherly wind; the mercury about noon at 71°. At four P. M. ☿ at 69°: at five o'clock the wind came about to N. W. blew exceſſively hard, and did great damage

in

	Mercury. Highest	Mercury. Lowest	
			in the country. A prodigious quantity of rain fell: it cleared up at ſix o' clock; but the wind continued blowing hard all night. At eight o'clock the ☿ was at 43°, at ſeven next morning at 26°, at nine at 24°¼, and the morning following, *viz.* the 18th, the mercury was at 15°.
			1756.
Jan.	73	15	
Feb.	70	27	
Mar.	—	—	Not obſerved, being hindered by buſineſs.
Apr.	83	29	Seaſonable weather.
May	81	48	Seaſonable weather.
June	86	44	Plenty of rain: the ſeaſon much colder than uſual, ☿ ſtanding frequently between 60° and 70°. On the 22d in the morning a black cloud came from the northward, ſoon overſpread the hemiſphere, and threatned much wind and rain; but ſoon blew over without much wind or rain. The ſun ſhone clear, and the weather calm, till towards noon, when clouds collected towards the north and north-weſt. About three P. M. there was the moſt threatning appearance I ever beheld: the clouds in ſome places of a deep green; in others, of a ſooty black. At 45 min. paſt three it began to rain and blow, attended with remarkable ſevere thunder; but as the thunder

thunder ſtopped the clock, I cannot ſay how long it laſted; but ſuppoſe near half an hour; in which time the moſt rain fell I ever ſaw. The wind did incredible damage in ſeveral parts of the country. In St. Mary's county, it is ſaid, 200 houſes were blown down, and many people killed. In every county in Maryland much damage was done by this guſt, which was the moſt general ever remembered. It was all over New York, the Jerſeys, Penſylvania, Maryland, and Virginia, and did much damage every where. How much farther it extended, either northward or ſouthward, I have not heard.

In theſe two laſt months an epidemical ſpotted fever was common in the country: I have not heard it was mortal any where. Thoſe, who had it moſt ſevere, were relieved with what Mr. Collinſon calls *apocinon*. There raged at the ſame time an epidemical diſeaſe amongſt the dogs, which deſtroyed great numbers in all the northern plantations. It came from thence to the eaſtern ſhore in Maryland, where it killed moſt of the dogs. It now rages amongſt our dogs, and ſcarce any recover. They are firſt ſeized with a ſhort cough, and a ſtoppage in the noſe, ſo that they are obliged to breathe thro' the mouth. In four,

	Mercury. Highest.	Mercury. Lowest.	
			five, or ſix days after, they have a large diſcharge thro' the noſtrils of a thick fetid matter, and a plentiful ſerous diſcharge from their eyes. Now their ſtomach fails, or rather they are afraid to eat; for every attempt makes them cough violently, and ſeems to give them great pain. Some die within two days after this diſcharge; ſome live a week, or longer: theſe have had food forced into their ſtomachs: but none ever recover, that I have heard of.
July	93	69	Seaſonable weather, and the moſt plentiful appearance of corn and tobacco I ever ſaw. The wheat was got in laſt month: it is ſuppoſed there will be the moſt of any year ſince the ſettlement of this country.
Aug.	93	68	Very dry. The diſeaſe amongſt dogs continues, tho' leſs violent: many have their limbs ſeized with a paralyſis: theſe all recover.
Sept.	92	60	The diſeaſe continues amongſt the dogs. This month I ſaw a tame fox very ill with this diſorder. I gave him a doſe of a valuable powder, with which I have done much good; and for the knowlege of which I was obliged to my worthy friend Dr. Parſons, when I was laſt in England. I have known this powder cure dogs; which made me give it to this fox: but he died in three

	Mercury.		
	Higheſt.	Loweſt.	
			three minutes after; which I attribute to the punch in which I gave it. This is the hotteſt and drieſt ſummer ever known in Maryland. There are great crops of corn and tobacco made; but, through the extreme dryneſs of the weather, the latter crops of neither will come to perfection. Many ſprings are dried up, that were ever current before. Putrid bilious fevers are now very frequent in the country, and have raged for theſe ſix weeks paſt. So likewiſe has an hepatic dyſentery, which, I have been informed (for it has not come within my own practice), has oftentimes been ſo malignant, as not to yield to any medicines that could be thought of.
Oct.	90	29	The weather ſeaſonable. The dyſenteries, that have been ſo fatal in many parts of the province, have reached my neighbourhood. The bilious fever now is, and for ſome time paſt has been, very common in this country. As the patients under my care had frequent large bilious ſtools (after the ſtimulus on the inteſtines was removed by opiates, and they voided no blood), imagining the fever and the flux owing to the ſame cauſe, only affecting different parts, I gave Dr. Parſons's powders, which I always uſed with ſucceſs, and my patients

Mercury.		
	Higheſt.	Loweſt.

got well. The method I found ſucceſsful, after trying many others, was to give opiates, at proper intervals, till the purging and bloody ſtools ceaſed: then four or five doſes of Dr. Parſons's powders: afterwards a few doſes of aſtringents, which never failed of curing. The opiate I uſed was *pil. matthæi*; which I ſuppoſed beſt in this putrid bilious complaint, becauſe of the ſoap in its compoſition. It is remarkable, that the frequent repetition of the ſtrongeſt aſtringents never decreaſed the quantity or number of the ſtools, till Dr. Parſons's powders were given. Theſe valuable powders, which that ingenious and benevolent gentleman communicated to me, when I was at London, have been of incredible ſervice in the plantations. I am perſuaded he will readily inform any practitioner what they are; and that nothing is wanting to bring them into general uſe, in all bilious and putrid fevers, but a thorough knowledge of their extraordinary efficacy.

Nov.	73	27	The hepatic flux ſpreads very much in my neighbourhood. On the 22d I was called to a family, where the miſtreſs and maid were both down with this diſorder, and appeared to have it very much alike. They were much griped, and purged more than

	Mercury. Highest.	Mercury. Lowest.	
			20 times in 24 hours: ſometimes blood in a large proportion was mixed with their ſtools; but the moſt troubleſome ſymptom was a violent *teneſmus*. The miſtreſs took two doſes of Dr. Parſons's powder, and the maid as many of Dr. James's. At night the miſtreſs took an anodyne draught, and the maid *gr.* 8 *pilulæ matthæi*. The next day they took ſome aſtringent powders, at night their anodyne, and the day following both were well. The ſmall-pox and ſwine-pox are now about the country.
Dec.	63	13	People in general very healthy. The ſmall-pox ſpreads but ſlowly, and is very favourable.
			1757.
Jan.	65	10	Many ſudden alterations, as to heat and cold, have been in this month: but the moſt remarkable I have ever obſerved, was the laſt day of this month, when the ☿ was up at 65°, and the next day, Feb. 1. when it was down at 28°, about the ſame hour in the day.
			The people of Maryland were afflicted laſt year with ſcarce any complaints which were not attended more or leſs with bilious ſymptoms; and as the year advanced, the weather being unuſually hot, ſuch ſymptoms grew more

more violent, and the bile more putreſcent. A bare ſtate of the many odd caſes that came under my care would fill ſeveral ſheets of paper; but as my own was very particular, I ſhall only mention that. I was taken on the 24th Dec. laſt with a ſlight fever and ſore throat, which continued three days: then the fever and ſore throat left me; but for three nights afterwards I felt more uneaſineſs than I ever before was ſenſible of, tho' quite free from pain or fever. I waked, I ſuppoſe, at leaſt an hundred times each of theſe nights. If I tried to lie on either ſide, I always turned inſenſibly on my back. When aſleep, my imagination was filled with the moſt frightful ideas that ever diſturbed an human mind; but I could remember none of them when I awoke. I conſtantly loſt my breath when aſleep; and was waked by an hideous whooping noiſe, like that of a child in a chin-cough. I preſently fell aſleep again, and the ſame horrid ſcene was re-acted. The ſeventh night from my firſt attack was attended with a new train of ſymptoms. About three o' clock in the morning I was afflicted with a moſt excruciating pain about the fifth or ſixth vertebra of the back, like the boring of an augre. I was forced to quit the bed, and, to my great

	Mercury.		
	Higheſt.	Loweſt.	
			great ſurprize, was eaſy almoſt as ſoon as I got on my cloaths: but it returned as ſoon as I attempted to lie down again. This laſted 27 days, ever free from pain while up, and always taken about ſeven hours after lying down, either by night or day. Neither the Indian bath, bliſters, or any thing I could think of, did relieve me: but getting up always eaſed me. It was plainly a ſpaſm of the muſcle trapizeus; for if I rubbed my back ever ſo ſlightly, the pain would inſtantly remove to the muſcles of the ſternum, *et vice verſa*; yet I could never feel it in my ſide. Whether it was leaving me or not, I cannot ſay: but I ſeemed to find great relief by drinking punch, into which Goa ſtone had been plentifully grated. It is very ſtrange, that during the whole time I had no fever, or loſt my appetite, tho' I grew very weak.
Feb.	67	8	It rained almoſt every day this month: and at this time there prevailed a diſorder among the Negroes, which, I believe, was peculiar to them; for I never heard of any white perſon's having it. They were taken with pains in their heads, necks, ſhoulders, breaſts, or bellies: it ſeldom continued long in a place, till it got to the thigh, where the complaint would form

	Mercury. Higheſt.	Loweſt.	
			form into a very hard and ſenſible tumour, generally in the triceps muſcle. Emollient plaiſters would commonly remove the tumour in two days time. The morbific matter would give exquiſite pain in its deſcent down the thigh, and would collect again into a tumour, either in the ham, or in the calf of the leg. The ſame cataplaſms continued would repel the tumour, and the patient would get well uſually in about a fortnight. There was an high fever during the time. I never knew but one ſuppurate, tho' I have ſeen many in this complaint: this happened to a Negro boy about 15 years old: here the matter deſcended to the foot, which was very troubleſome to heal.
Mar.	65	30	A vaſt deal of rain fell this month.
Apr.	67	35	The wetteſt and coldeſt April within man's memory. Impetigenous diſorders very common both in Maryland and Virginia, and ſome very obſtinate.
May	88	48	Seaſonable and healthy.
June	90	72	An uncommon wet month. The hard rains beat off the flour, or *farina fecundans*, of the wheat; ſo that very little of that grain was made this year.
July	90	64	Much rain. It is very remarkable, that many people, this month and the laſt, in

	Mercury. Highest.	Mercury. Lowest.	
			in different parts of the country, were troubled with impoſthumations under the arm, all in the *axillâ dextra*. They maturated, and healed up pretty eaſily. Whether this has any affinity to the diſpoſition of the preſent and preceding year, I cannot ſay: I before obſerved, that almoſt every patient, in whatever diſorder, had more or leſs of bilious ſymptoms. I have ſeen more inflammations of the neck of the bladder this month than all my life before: They were cured by antiphlogiſtic medicines.
Aug.	90	67	Much rain, and thick foggy weather.
Sept.	88	47	Very wet. Within theſe two months I have ſeen five perſons, and have heard of many more, who were taken with a violent pain in the *os fronits*, on the left ſide. The pain ſoon fell into the Eye on the ſame ſide, and occaſioned a dimneſs: but this and the pain were ſoon removed by an epiſpaſtic behind the ear, if applied early. I was called to a Negro wench, who had had the complaint ſo long, that ſhe was totally blind of both eyes; which appeared, as in the *gutta ſerena*, without any inflammation, or viſible defect; but extremely painful. In her likewiſe the left eye was firſt affected, and much the moſt difficult of cure. Cauſtics behind the ears, and vitriolic

	Mercury. Highest.	Mercury. Lowest.	
			collyriums, cured her: but three cauſtics were put behind the left ear, before that eye was well.
Oct.	67	43	Very wet. Many horſes died this month of a peſtilential fever. They had the ſymptoms Markham deſcribes in his chapter of Peſtilential. Hen-dung infuſed in ſtale urine (which Markham recommends) was found ſerviceable. Many people were ruined by the loſs of all their horſes: but none died that had plenty of the juice of rue. It is remarkable that no horſes had this diſtemper, but thoſe on the ſalts of the different rivers. Mr. Pollard Edmunſon, a gentleman on the eaſtern ſhore of Cheſſapeak, told me, he loſt almoſt every horſe by this diſorder at his home plantation (the water there is ſalt), and not one in a foreſt paſture about a mile off.
Nov.	65	33	The diſeaſe among horſes is over. On the 10th day of this month there was as ſevere a guſt of thunder and lightning, as is common in July or Auguſt. Several horſes, cattle, *&c.* were killed in different parts. There were the moſt luminous coruſcations I ever ſaw; the whole hemiſphere as it were in a blaze.
Dec.	68	28	Very variable weather: many high winds, and much rain.